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HCOM 434: Creative Publishing and Critical  
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## Their Land

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## **Their Land**

I prowled lands that once used to be mine. My ancestors existed in these walls, although I find that quite hard to believe; what, my mother expects me to believe we were once kept captive within shattered crystal floors and melting white barriers? Water creeps, resting above the shattered colors, staining my fur and paws with wet grime that I despise; I find it hard to believe any ancestor of mine could be contained, maintained, restrained, within a home broken through animalistic force and by vines creeping up walls.

Looking at my mother, steps away from me, her brown striped fur glistening with freshwater we've both becoming accustomed to trucking through, her eyes filled with wonder as though she had lived amongst Them herself. She scanned the decorations across the wall, colors I could not see have long left this earth, scanned the remnants of shapes of objects that once served Them, now decaying yet not reeking of a kill.

They had been gone, now, for quite some time. I had existed long before They ever did, and I will continue to exist long after They had vanished. Maybe one day, I will become Them. Despite my age and timelessness I bear, Their impact is so much more than anything I could dream of. But for now, this moment, I existed in Their space as a survivor.

They may have left their mark irreparably on the world we inhabit, but They did not survive. They made us simpler, softer, smaller, but in Their absence, we only grew larger to compensate for the damage They left.

I've had enough – Their contraptions may have been enough to contain my ancestors, but They can contain me no longer. Their contaminants, creations, containments, no longer bind me; stepping outside of Their dissolving cave, the wind races and rustles through what it can reach and erodes what it cannot. The water rises, kept by nothing more than the fish in the sea and the bays at the edges. Each year, the cold feels colder than before, more fur and flesh stuck together to keep warm.

Come, it's time to leave Their memories. They exist among us no longer, and the world has yet to stop turning. With pavement and weeds underpaw, the world awaits, a hunt to keep my world turning.